

August 24, 2021 Council Meeting

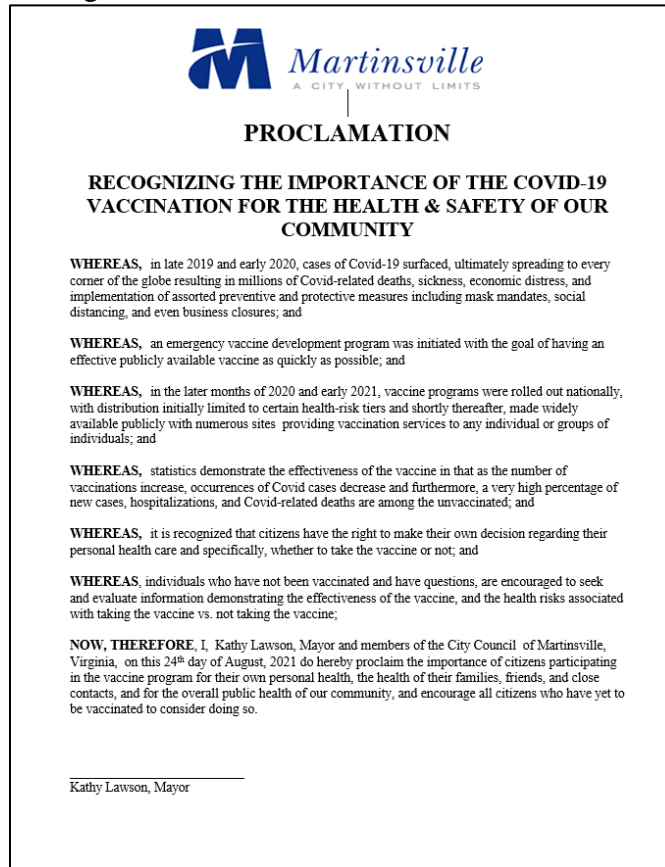
The regular meeting of the Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia was held on August 24, 2021 in Council Chambers, Municipal Building, at 7:00 PM with Mayor Kathy Lawson presiding. Other Council Members present included Danny Turner, Chad Martin, Jennifer Bowles and Tammy Pearson. Staff present included Assistant City Manager/City Attorney Eric Monday, Clerk of Council Karen Roberts, Finance Director Linda Conover, Assistant Finance Director Mandy Muse, and Police Lieutenant Sandy Hines.

Mayor Lawson called the meeting to order and advised Council would go into Closed Session beginning at 6:00 PM. In accordance with section 2.1-344 (A) Code of Virginia (1950, and as amended) and upon a motion by Vice Mayor Bowles, seconded by Council Member Turner with the following 4-0 recorded vote: Council Member Turner, aye; Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Council Member Pearson, aye; and Mayor Lawson, aye. Council convened in Closed Session to discuss the following matters: (A) Discussion or consideration of the investment of public funds where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the governmental unit would be adversely affected, as authorized by Subsection 6 and (B) Consultant with legal counsel and briefings by staff members, attorneys or consultant pertaining to actual or probable litigation, or other specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, as authorized by Subsection 7. At the conclusion of Closed Session, each returning member of Council certified that (1) only public business matters exempt from open meeting requirements were discussed in said Closed Session; and (2) only those business matters identified in the motion convening the Closed Session were heard, discussed, or considered during the meeting. A motion was made by Vice Mayor Bowles; seconded by Council Member Turner with the following 4-0 recorded vote in favor to recess Closed Session and return to Open Session: Mayor Lawson, aye; Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Council Member Turner, aye; Council Member Pearson, aye. No action was taken out of Closed Session.


Following the Pledge to the American Flag and invocation by Mayor Lawson, Lawson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mayor Lawson explained that the meeting would follow COVID guidelines, allowing limited attendance and recognizing social distancing recommendations. Council Member Martin arrived at 7:05pm

Approve minutes from the August 10, 2021 Council Meeting – Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

Consider reading a proclamation acknowledging the importance of COVID vaccinations for the good of the public health of our community – Council Member Pearson read the proclamation. Mayor Lawson referenced an article from the Martinsville Bulletin related to COVID vaccinations and another article written by Dr. Gary Miller, Cardiologist and member of Danville, Virginia City Council that discussed the after effects of COVID.



Consider adoption of a resolution setting the allocation percentage for personal property tax relief for qualifying vehicles in the City of Martinsville for tax year 2021 – Commissioner of the Revenue Ruth Easley explained the need for this annual allocation and resolution and the changes on rates from 2020. Easley explained that they do not tax local car lots on used car inventory. Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to adopt the resolution. Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with the following roll call vote: Council Member Martin, aye; Council Member Pearson, aye; Mayor Lawson, aye; Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; and Council Member Turner, aye.

<i>Council Members</i> Kathy Lawson, Mayor Jennifer Bowles, Vice-Mayor Chad Martin Danny Turner Tammy Pearson	 Martinsville <small>A CITY WITHOUT LIMITS</small>	<i>City Manager</i> Leon E. Towarnicki <i>City Attorney</i> Eric H. Monday <i>Clerk of Council</i> Karen Roberts
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RESOLUTION
SETTING THE ALLOCATION PERCENTAGE FOR PERSONAL
PROPERTY TAX RELIEF IN THE CITY OF MARTINSVILLE FOR TAX
YEAR 2021

WHEREAS, on December 13, 2005 by Ordinance 2005-8 the Martinsville City Council established a local program of tax relief that serves the best interests of its citizens regarding personal property tax on qualifying use vehicles, pursuant to modifications made by the General Assembly of Virginia to the Personal Property Tax Relief Act of 1998 (PPTRA); and

WHEREAS, the city's relief program requires the city council to adopt an annual percentage of local tax relief for personal use vehicles valued between \$1,001 and the first \$20,000 that will fully exhaust the PPTRA relief funds provided to the city by the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of the Revenue has completed the annual assessment of motor vehicles with Martinsville tax situs for Tax Year 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of the Revenue estimates that a percentage of relief of 42.28% applied to the first \$20,000 of assessed values for qualifying vehicles valued over \$1,000 will fully use all available state PPTRA relief allocated for tax year 2021,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Martinsville City Council that 42.28% shall be the percentage of relief to be applied to the first \$20,000 in value of each qualifying vehicle with an assessed value more than \$1,000 pursuant to and in accordance with provisions of Sec. 21-10 of the Martinsville City Code.

Adopted this 24th day of August, 2021.

_____ Kathy Lawson, Mayor	ATTEST: _____ Clerk of Council
Jennifer Bowles Kathy Lawson Chad Martin Tammy Pearson Danny Turner	VOTE _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

55 West Church Street, P. O. Box 1112, Martinsville, VA 24114-1112 276-403-5180 Fax: 276-403-5280
www.martinsville-va.gov

Consider adoption of a resolution approving the Voluntary Settlement Agreement for Reversion – City Attorney Monday explained the need for the resolution and briefly summarized the steps taken in the reversion process. Public hearings and private deliberation dates have been set for September 7-8. Council Member Turner ask for details on Commonwealth Crossing and if Henry County would be able to tax the property. Council Member Pearson was contacted by citizens who have asked to review the agreement prior to Council’s approval. Monday explained that Council’s approval is required at tonight’s meeting to proceed with the reversion timetable and the agreement will be publicly released after the Council meeting. Pearson prefers to push back the timetable giving citizens the opportunity to review the copy. Citizens have also voiced concern over the school system and how the reversion will affect them. Monday explained how the school system fits in with reversion, explaining that the buildings are property of the school board and not the City. The school is not a necessary party to this resolution and is not required in this decision. Mayor Lawson explained that the MOU has already been approved so even if the resolution is not adopted tonight, the reversion will continue forward. The City and the County have agreed to the suggested date. The City will not agree to any future extensions unless Council Members instruct them to. Council Member Martin made a motion to adopt the resolution. Council Member Turner seconded the motion with the following 4-1 roll call vote: Mayor Lawson, aye; Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Council Member Martin, aye; Council Member Pearson, nay; and Council Member Turner, aye.



RESOLUTION

**APPROVING A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT OF
TOWN STATUS ISSUES BETWEEN THE CITY AND HENRY COUNTY, VIRGINIA,
REQUESTING THE COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S REVIEW, AND
STATING THE CITY COUNCIL'S INTENTION TO ADOPT THE AGREEMENT AFTER THE
COMMISSION'S REVIEW AND TO PETITION AN APPROPRIATE CIRCUIT COURT TO
APPROVE THE AGREEMENT
AND TO GIVE IT FULL FORCE AND EFFECT**

WHEREAS, on September 18, 2020, the City of Martinsville, by counsel, initiated a proceeding before the Commission on Local Government (the "Commission"), pursuant to Title 15.2, Chapter 41 of the Virginia Code, to revert from city to town status;

WHEREAS, on November 30, 2020, Henry County, by counsel, filed its response to Martinsville's notice of intent to petition for an order granting it town status;

WHEREAS, the City of Martinsville and Henry County entered into negotiations to seek a voluntary settlement of the city-to-town reversion proceeding;

WHEREAS, the Parties entered into a Memorandum of Understanding dated April 29, 2021, in contemplation of a comprehensive settlement agreement providing for Martinsville's reversion from city to town status and addressing the allocation of governmental services following that change in governmental structure, the transfer of certain properties, the sharing of certain revenues, a temporary moratorium of annexation rights, and other matters;

WHEREAS, on May 26, 2021, at a joint public meeting, the Parties' respective governing bodies approved the Memorandum of Understanding;

WHEREAS, the City of Martinsville and Henry County are now prepared to enter into a voluntary settlement agreement, which provides for the reversion of Martinsville to town status within Henry County and addresses the allocation of governmental services following that change in governmental structure, the transfer of certain properties, the sharing of certain revenues, a temporary moratorium of annexation rights, and other matters;

WHEREAS, Title 15.2, Chapter 34 of the Virginia Code requires the Commission to review such a voluntary settlement; and

WHEREAS, § 50-20-230 of Title 1 of the Virginia Administrative Code requires the governing body of each locality to adopt a resolution requesting the Commission to review the agreement, stating the locality's intention to adopt the agreement subsequent to the Commission's review, and indicating the name, title, address, phone number, and, where available, fax number and email address of the individual who shall serve as each locality's principal contact with the Commission during the period of its review;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED
BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA THAT:**

1. The City Council hereby approves the Voluntary Settlement Agreement Between the City of Martinsville and the County of Henry (the "Agreement"), a copy of which is attached hereto, hereby authorizes and directs the Mayor and City Manager to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City, and hereby authorizes and directs the City Attorney to approve the Agreement as to form;
2. The City Council hereby requests that the Commission review the Agreement pursuant to § 15.2-3400 of the Virginia Code, and the regulations of the Commission;
3. The City Manager and the City's legal counsel are hereby directed to refer the agreement, together with all necessary data and materials, to the Commission and to take all other actions as may be required to accomplish the Commission's review of the Agreement;
4. The City Council hereby designates the following individuals as the City's contact persons for communications with the Commission regarding the review of the Agreement:

John S. West, Partner
Stephen C. Piegras, Partner
Robert S. Claiborne, Jr., Associate
Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders LLP
P.O. Box 1122
1001 Haxall Point, Suite 1500
Richmond, Virginia 23219
Telephone: 804.697.1200
Facsimile: 804.697.1339
john.west@troutman.com
stephen.piegras@troutman.com
robert.claiborne@troutman.com

Eric H. Monday
City Attorney
P.O. Box 1112
55 West Church Street
Suite 213
Martinsville Virginia 24112
Telephone: 276.403.5198
Facsimile: 276.403.5194
emonday@ci.martinsville.va.us

with Mr. Piegras serving as the City's principal contact with the Commission; and

5. It is the intention of the City Council, after the Commission's review, to adopt the Agreement and thereafter to petition an appropriate Circuit Court to affirm and validate the Agreement and to give it full force and effect.

Adopted this ____ day of August, 2021.

Attest:

Karen Roberts, Clerk of Council

Consider approval of a new management contract for the Martinsville Mustangs baseball team with Next Plan Athletics, LLC, a group of locally based citizens – City Attorney Monday explained that the current management contract expires the end of August. This is a 2-year contract with a local based company. Jason and Tonya Davis, representatives of Next Plan Athletics were in attendance to answer questions. They look forward to making Hooker Field a better experience and a bigger value to the community. They are anxious to get started and begin recruiting immediately. Housing a player for the 2-month season can build a life-long family bond. They expect to upgrade the batting cages and concession stand, provide reasonably priced tickets and open the games to businesses in the community. They look forward to using local resources to benefit the area as a whole. They are considering concert nights and movie nights, and potentially new uniforms with a salute to service members. They look forward to working as a collaborative partner with the City. Council Member Turner expressed concern that Martinsville does not have enough relationships with college coaches to recruit good players. He feels that since the previous management company owned more than one team, that it benefited those other teams more than Martinsville. Davis explained that they are starting the recruiting process early and have a positive relationship with various colleges. The coach has a very unique and aggressive style of recruiting. Next Plan Athletics is a group of 10-12 members who will share the responsibilities in the best interest of the team. Council Member Martin expressed his opposition and feels that it is wrong to terminate the contract of the previous manager who did so much for the team during a pandemic. Council Member Pearson made a motion to approve

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the new management contract. Vice Mayor Bowles seconded the motion with the following 4-1 roll call vote: Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Council Member Turner, aye; Council Member Pearson, aye; Council Member Martin, nay; and Mayor Lawson, aye.

**CONTRACT
FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE MARTINSVILLE MUSTANGS**

THIS CONTRACT, made and entered into this the _____ day of _____, 2021 and between the City of Martinsville, Virginia, a municipal corporation created and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of Virginia (hereinafter referred to as "City"), and Next PLAN Athletics LLC, a Virginia limited liability company, ("Contractor").

WITNESSETH

THAT, WHEREAS the preceding contract for management services of the Martinsville Mustangs terminates at the conclusion of the 2021 season; and,

WHEREAS, the City desires to continue with contracted services for management of the Martinsville Mustangs baseball team for the 2022-23 season and possibly beyond; and,

WHEREAS, the Contractor has expressed a desire to enter into a contract with the City for management services of the Martinsville Mustangs baseball team for the 2022-23 seasons;

NOW, THEREFORE, that for and in consideration of the mutual and respective covenants and agreements contained herein and made with respect to the performance of the services by the Contractor, the parties to this Contract hereby agree as follows:

Section I - General Terms & Conditions

A. Term and Renewals – The term of this Agreement shall cover the 2022-2023 baseball seasons, specifically commencing on September 1, 2021 and ending August 31, 2023. An option to renew beyond the 2023 baseball season may be considered subject to (1) mutual agreement by both parties to the renewal, including any changes to conditions of the contract; and (2) approval of continued funding by the City of Martinsville if needed. The parties shall communicate to each their respective desires concerning renewal no later than February 1, 2023.

B. Agreement Protections for the City – Under the terms of this Agreement, the Contractor will not have the opportunity to move the team to another location. The Contractor will be responsible for reimbursing the City for amounts paid under this Agreement if Contractor's responsibilities under Section 3 are breached.

C. Compensation – The City shall compensate the Contractor for management services under the terms of this Agreement the sum of \$39,000 for the 2022 season and \$39,000 for the 2023 season. Payment will be rendered by September 30, each year.

D. Sale of Team – This Agreement does not restrict the City from considering options that may involve sale of the team. Any plan to sell the team may only be executed following the expiration

of this management agreement on August 31, 2023, unless a date sooner is agreed upon by the Contractor. In addition, Contractor shall, during the term of this Contract, enjoy a right of first refusal to purchase the franchise, subject to approval by the Coastal Plain League.

E. Use of Facility – Use of Hooker Field under this Agreement shall be for Martinsville baseball events/tournaments/classics and league preseason, regular season and postseason baseball games. Scheduling of Mustangs preseason, regular season and post-season games will take precedence over other events at the facility and will be established on the Hooker Field calendar first. Contractor is permitted to use the facility for events/activities to help defray team costs subject to (1) approval of any such events through the City's Special Event application process, (2) approval by the City to ensure no conflicts with other facility usages, and (3) approval by the City to ensure the event(s) will not damage the field or facilities. Martinsville High School, Patrick Henry Community College, and the local American Legion program currently use Hooker Field for their home games and in some cases, practices, and shall be allowed to continue to do so. The City retains the right to seek and/or schedule other events throughout the duration of this contract, as long as they do not conflict with Mustangs' preseason, regular season and post season games. The contractor shall assume sole and exclusive responsibility for any injury, loss or liability suffered by any third party which arises from or is related to a Mustangs game or event, and shall hold the City harmless from any claims made as a result of such injury, loss or liability. Any insurance against such claims shall be the exclusive responsibility of the Contractor. The City shall maintain overall liability insurance for the facility as a component of the City's general liability policy. The City shall retain exclusive legal and equitable title to Hooker Field's realty, playing facility, offices, locker rooms, concessions facilities, parking lots, electronic signage and any other facilities and equipment on the Hooker Field campus.

F. This Agreement shall be interpreted and governed under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. In the event any portion of it is found to be unenforceable, such portion shall be severable and the remainder shall continue in full force and effect. In the event of any disagreement between the parties as to enforcement or interpretation of this Agreement, the parties shall first attempt to resolve their dispute through mediation. Any litigation arising from this Agreement shall be venued in Martinsville, Virginia.

Section II – City Responsibilities:

A. Provide maintenance of the facility, including but not limited to game-day mowing; turf maintenance/care; preparation of the field for Mustangs home games; maintenance of the sprinkler system; maintenance of field lighting; scoreboard; public address system; painting when done as normal maintenance; maintenance of heating, cooling, plumbing, and electrical

<p>systems in the clubhouse, restrooms, and concession buildings; and any other usual and customary maintenance that would be considered as regular facility maintenance.</p> <p>B. Provide, free of charge, all supplies necessary to clean and maintain the restrooms, grandstands, and concession building.</p> <p>C. Provide and make available use of the various buildings located at the Hooker Field facility. The original locker room building is used during the spring and fall by Patrick Henry Community College. This original locker room space will be made available to the contractor two days following (not to surpass May 16th) the completion of the Patrick Henry CC spring season. Space at the facility shall be made available for office use to the extent of whatever currently exists on site.</p> <p>D. Provide, free of charge, City utilities for the facility – water, sewer, electric, refuse collection, telephone, and MiNET internet services.</p> <p>E. Maintain general liability insurance on the facility.</p> <p>F. Provide the annual letter of credit required by the Coastal Plain League.</p> <p>G. Continue to provide use of parking facilities currently used for Mustangs' games.</p> <p>H. Provide security for scheduled Mustangs' games.</p> <p>I. Allow the Contractor to represent the City at League meetings, to the extent those discussions involve issues related to management of the team and scheduling.</p> <p><u>Section III – Contractor Responsibilities:</u></p> <p>A. Agree to operate the Martinsville Mustangs baseball team as a team affiliated with the Coastal Plain League, in accordance with all League rules and requirements.</p> <p>B. Hire all game day and related staff as necessary including but not limited to the general manager, coaching staff, concession workers, ticket personnel, ushers, announcers, and press box personnel as needed to meet League requirements, as well as other personnel as deemed necessary by the Contractor. Such hires, especially for the roles of GM/AGM, head coach, etc., should be first discussed with the CPL League Office in advance and league approval necessary to allow the league office to assist with the vetting process with the overall goal of aiding both Next Plan, LLC, and the City of Martinsville in hiring the right staff for a successful operation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p>C. Be responsible for payment of all fees and all labor related to operation of the team, including but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. League dues and umpire fees; 2. team travel arrangements and related expenses; 3. team and staff meal costs; 4. arrangement of housing for players and/or staff; 5. purchasing/providing game day supplies including bats, balls, uniforms, playing equipment; 6. purchase of concession and souvenir supplies; 7. clean-up of concession and restroom facilities; 8. cleanup and preparation for removal by the City refuse service of all game related trash and debris from the Hooker Field campus; 9. ticket pricing, design, printing, sales and management; 10. marketing, advertising, promotions, sponsorships, etc. <p>D. Contractor shall undertake its best efforts to ensure that tickets prices are reasonable for this area, and to ensure concession operations at a prompt and efficient level with reasonable prices.</p> <p>E. Contractor shall cooperatively coordinate with Patrick Henry Community College (or its nominal successor), Martinsville City Public Schools (or its successor) and the American Legion planning for their use of Hooker Field. Contractor shall undertake to encourage the use of Hooker Field by youth baseball leagues and organizations.</p> <p>F. Contractor shall at all times comply with EEOC requirements and shall undertake its best efforts to subcontract with local entities in the operation of Hooker Field.</p> <p>G. Provide and maintain insurance coverage, in the minimum cumulative amount of \$1million, related to any events (including games) held, sponsored, or organized by the contractor at the facility. The City shall be furnished a Certificate of Insurance as evidence of such coverage and the City shall be endorsed on the insurance policy as an additional insured prior to any such events.</p> <p>H. Be responsible for all permits (including but not limited to ABC, Health, Business License, etc.) and/or licensing requirements related to operation of the Martinsville Mustangs.</p> <p>I. Have the opportunity to change logos currently in use, change uniforms, offer new/different merchandise, etc. The City will be allowed input in any such changes and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p>
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<p>consulting/approval from the CPL is necessary before completion on any logo/branding changes, as well as uniform-related changes per league rules.</p> <p>J. Communicate with the City any issues from League meetings or related sources, issues related to the Hooker Field facility as they pertain to operation of the Martinsville Mustangs baseball team.</p> <p>K. Contractor shall make its financial records available to the City upon request.</p> <p>IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said City of Martinsville has caused this Contract to be executed in its name by its City Manager; and Next PLAN Athletics, LLC has caused this Agreement to be executed in its name by one of its Member-Managers, duly authorized to sign on its behalf; this the day and year above written.</p> <p>CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA Next PLAN Athletics, LLC</p> <p>BY: _____ City Manager Member-Manager</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>
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Business from the Floor – Pastor Richardson approached the podium and shared his concern about reversion and the affect on the City school system.



Sanctuary
Organized 1935

Mount Sinai Church

7 Peters Street (PO Box 1421) * Martinsville, Virginia 24114
Phone: 276.632.4819 *Fax: 276.632.7650
*Email: sinai4819@comcast.net

Bishop J.C. Richardson, Sr., Founding Pastor (1910-1995)
Dr. J.C. Richardson, Jr., Pastor

Martinsville City Council Meeting

Tuesday, August 24, 2021 – 7:30 PM

Mayor Lawson and Members of City Council,

The article in The Martinsville Bulletin, Sunday, August 22, 2021, titled, **"Council Pulls Out of Joint Meeting,"** raised a number of questions. So this evening, it is my intent to focus on the issue of why The Consolidation of The Martinsville City Public Schools with Henry County Public Schools is even being considered.

The term, **"Under Performing"**, has been circulating relative to the status of Martinsville Public Schools. If that is in fact the situation, who is able to provide verifiable evidence to support such a claim? Further, when we look at the subject of **School Consolidation** in the context of possible **Reversion**, there are some questions that come to mind:

- 1) Why is City Council taking the leadership in such an endeavor?
- 2) What are the levels of participation by The Martinsville School Board and The Henry County School Board?
- 3) What input has been sought from the Superintendents of both school divisions?

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- 4) What opportunities have been provided for The School Administrations, Faculty and Staffs to participate?
- 5) Most importantly, what inquiries have been directed toward the students and parents regarding their thoughts and wishes?
- 6) How will the Public in general, and all other stakeholders be asked to participate?

We have already seen a level of secrecy related to conversations about Reversion that are rather troubling. And yes, we have been made aware that what you are doing, and the way that you are doing it is entirely legal. But much of the Civil Rights Era was based on confronting and addressing legislation that has been signed into Law. And we all know that many of those Laws were immoral, unethical, and totally devoid of any Christian Foundation. Because secrecy is legal does not mean that it is moral, just, or fair.

In Sunday's article, there was a statement that read, **"Reversion will make Martinsville High School (the) property of Henry County, and some board of supervisors have suggested the building might better be used for another purpose."** Just as Martinsville City Council appears to be leading the charge on issue of Public School Consolidation, with these significant comments attributed to the Henry County Board of Supervisors, what in the world are our students thinking at this time? And does anyone actually care?

It is my understanding that Martinsville City Public Schools have made excellent progress during the past several years. Academic performances have risen steadily across the board, while disciplinary problems and suspensions have consistently decreased. In my opinion, those are extraordinary reasons to support The Martinsville Public Schools. Additionally, accreditation has been maintained in all of our schools.

So, I respectfully ask what is the reason that School Consolidation is being considered and why is it being led by City Council initially as opposed to The School Boards?

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One lesson that January 6, 2021 taught me is this. The more we seek to minimize wide spread participation of the citizens in our Democracy, the greater we jeopardize and put at risk the pillars that undergird and sustain the importance of American Democracy. That is true on the National, the State and the Local levels.

I therefore respectfully ask that this process of School Consolidation be discontinued for at least these reasons:

- 1) We have no comprehensive data that warrants and supports the merging of Martinsville Public Schools into the Henry County School System.
- 2) All of the appropriate and import stakeholders have not been included in this process.
- 3) We have not been presented with any kind of plan that focuses on the implementation of equity and fairness, nor any legal assurance that such is being considered.

Thank you for your time and for your attention.

J. C. Richardson, Jr.

Mayor Lawson explained that Council Members would respond to Richardson's concerns outside of the meeting. Lawson confirmed that an email was sent to Dr. Talley and Mrs. Dillard of the school board informing them that Council Members would not be attending their meeting. Reverend Tyler Millner asked if anything done now will have any bearing on the September 8 meeting regarding reversion and the schools. Lawson encourage Millner to attend the public hearing on September 8 to voice his concerns. Lawson explained that Henry County and Martinsville have come to an agreement and the commission will listen to public comments regarding anything else that needs to be considered. Council member Martin suggested Millner put his concerns in writing to ensure all of his concerns can be addressed.

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Comments by City Council – Council Member Martin has a new position at Virginia Tech with an opportunity for youth groups to attend a free Virginia Tech football game. Martin addressed the representatives of Next Plan Athletics and explained that his statements were not directed at them in a negative way but that the process is frustrating to him that the current group was not given the contract. Council Member Turner stated that September 11 is the 20th Anniversary of the World Trade Center bombing; local residents are looking to do a commemoration event at the Farmers Market and provide free meals for service members, firefighters, EMS, and others. Flags will be flown in the City on September 11. Council Member Pearson thanked Bishop Richardson for coming forward with his concerns. She wished residents a happy Labor Day and reminded them that Labor Day is a time to pay tribute to the American workers. Pearson stated that workers are needed for many businesses in our area. Smith River Fest was a success and Pearson thanked the organizers and sponsors for a wonderful event. She congratulated the Boys & Girls Club for reaching their goal with the duck fundraiser. Vice Mayor Bowles encouraged residents to reach out to Council Members with concerns. She met with Senator Warner at P&HCC to discuss broadband in the area. Bowles encouraged residents to get vaccinated for COVID. She was proud to announce that she had been appointed to Blue Ridge PBS Board and she looks forward to representing Martinsville. Mayor Lawson shared that Smith River Festival and the Uptown Music Festival at the museum were both successful and well attended. August 8 is Community Day at Jack Dalton Park and will be sponsored by the Southside Survivor Response Center. Lawson requested an update on the property violation list and demolition list to discuss at an upcoming council meeting.

Comments by the Assistant City Manager/City Attorney – City Attorney Monday announced that City Manager Towarnicki was a first-time grandfather to Leo Alan Towarnicki, born around 4:00am on August 24, 2021.

There being no further business, Council Member Turner made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Council Member Martin with all Council Members voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Karen Roberts
Clerk of Council

Kathy Lawson
Mayor